

Utah's Division of Child and Family Services

Salt Lake Region Report

Qualitative Case Review Findings

Reviews Conducted

October 24-27, 2011

December 5-8, 2011

A Report by

The Office of Services Review, Department of Human Services

I. Introduction

The Salt Lake Region Qualitative Case Reviews (QCR) for FY2012 were held the weeks of October 24-27, 2011 and December 5-8, 2011. Reviewers were selected from the Office of Services Review, the Division of Child and Family Services, community partners and other interested parties. There were three out-of-state representatives from Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services who participated as full week reviewers. Reviewers also included individuals from the following organizations and agencies:

- The Adoption Exchange
- Bureau of Internal Review and Audit
- Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- Fostering Healthy Children
- Juvenile Justice Services
- Quality Improvement Committee
- Salt Lake County Youth Services
- Shared Goals
- Utah Foster Care Foundation

There were 50 cases randomly selected for the Salt Lake Region reviews, 25 cases for each review. The case samples included 42 foster care cases and 8 in-home cases. One of the in-home cases was not reviewed because consent was not obtained from the family prior to the review. All six offices in the region had cases selected as part of the random sample, which included the Metro, Mid Towne, Oquirrh, South Towne, Transition to Adult Living (TAL), and Tooele offices. A certified lead reviewer and shadow reviewer were assigned to each case. Information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents or other guardians, foster parents (if child was placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. Additionally, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations and other available records, was reviewed.

Staff from the Office of Services Review met with region staff on February 1, 2012 in an exit conference to review the results of the region's QCR. Scores and data analysis were reviewed with the region.

II. Stakeholder Observations

The results of the QCR should be considered within a broad context of local or regional interaction with community partners. Each year, the Office of Service Review staff supporting the qualitative reviews interview key community stakeholders such as birth families, youth, foster parents, providers, representatives from the legal community, other community agencies, and DCFS staff. On November 16 and November 29, 2011 members of the OSR staff interviewed individuals and groups of DCFS staff and community partners. DCFS staff who were interviewed included the Regional Director, region administrators, supervisors, and

caseworkers. Community partners interviewed included a guardian ad litem, assistant attorneys general, foster parents, service providers, and school representatives. Strengths and opportunities for improvement were identified by the various groups of stakeholders as described below.

ASSISTANT ATTORNEYS GENERAL AND GUARDIANS AD LITEM

Strengths

Open Communication Between Legal Partners and Salt Lake Region- Legal partners have seen a significant improvement between workers and their offices in the openness of communication and the inclusion of legal partners in team meetings. This is encouraged by administration and has become a regular part of how the Salt Lake region does business. Legal partners who usually attend team meetings wish there was a way to encourage legal partners who don't usually attend to begin attending. There has been open communication between the offices of the legal partners and Salt Lake region administrators. The Region Director and Associate Director are regular attendees at the AAG's section staff meeting. They inform the legal partners of any changes that are being made in the region. They also discuss any issue that the AAG's may have either with workers or other staff.

Locating Kin- The legal partners see Salt Lake Region making ongoing efforts to locate extended family members who may be willing to have a child placed with them. Workers were especially focused on finding non-custodial parents (usually the father) of children coming into care. Even in cases where the Region was working with older youth, caseworkers seemed focused on finding family members who would be a permanent part of the child's life. There is also a focus on keeping youth in their community if risks of harm can be managed. These topics are regularly discussed in team meetings and at the time of removal. Workers are usually aware of the child's school, religion and social supports within the area where the family resides.

Better Services for TAL (Transition to Adult Living) Youth- Several of the TAL youth are preparing to attend college. The region has sought out and developed new services for TAL youth that seem to be making a difference as they age out of service. Legal partners are seeing more housing vouchers, more mentor programs and better access to employment options for TAL youth who are transitioning out of foster care. There are times when TAL youth are successful because of their worker's efforts more than anything else. When a worker continues to search for and finds familial supports for TAL youth, those youth are more likely to succeed.

"Lunch and Learn" Trainings- "Lunch and Learn" trainings have given the AAG's office an opportunity to have open conversations with the front line workers and to teach them about the legal process. AAG's wish that after a worker has a couple of months of experience, they could have a full day of legal training including a full case walk through. There is a concern that new employees are receiving legal information from other workers that is not correct.

Improvement Opportunities

Searching for Additional Kinship Options- There are times when legal partners wish that workers would look a little closer at extended family members before children are placed with them. Sometimes workers find a marginal family member, and then stop their search for additional family members. If they had continued to search, the workers may have found family members that would have been more appropriate or a better fit for the child. A unique concern has to do with children who are brought into custody whose extended family are undocumented and thus are unable to apply for adoption of the child. Sometimes children have been placed with less desirable family members because the more appropriate family members are not documented.

Focusing Foster/Proctor Parents on Permanency- More work needs to be done around training proctor parents and proctor agencies about the importance of achieving permanency (adoption or guardianship). Proctor parents are quicker to ask that a child who is acting out be removed than are foster parents who are focused on permanency. Foster families who understand the importance of permanency are more willing to work through behavior issues than those who do foster care as a means of income.

Investigating Domestic Violence Cases- A legal partner called in a concern about a domestic violence situation and was told that DCFS could only investigate domestic violence if the parent had sustained “substantial injuries,” but the intake worker could not give her a clear definition as to what substantial injuries included. Some children remain in homes where they witness violent behaviors that are more damaging to them than what they experience as a result of neglect.

AAG’s Participating in Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM)- The AAGs indicated that another trend they are seeing is the increase in parents having attorneys assigned to them by the court, thus making it even more difficult for AAG’s to participate in Child and Family Team meetings because the parents’ attorney is unwilling to attend and the AAG should not be having any conversation with the parent without their attorney present. Often AAG’s are not contacted by the worker until after the team meeting and then it is to inform them that the team has met and tell them what the team is going to do. New workers are often given poor legal advice by other workers or from their supervisor. Then as a team they make decisions that can’t be supported by the court. Sometimes workers have to take their case before a committee, and the committee’s recommendations bear more influence than does the advice of the AAG. Possibly when committees are called to give workers direction on case proceedings, there needs to be an AAG invited to the meeting so that recommendations can be upheld in court. Another area of concern is court reports coming to the court without any recommendations. This is frustrating to both the AAG’s and the court.

Training Workers in Forensic Interviewing- Legal partners believe all CPS investigators should receive forensic interview training (FIT). Their concern is that CPS investigators hear a story from a parent or a perpetrator and accept that information as fact instead of following up to verify the accuracy of what they have heard. An example is a parent who states that a child attends school regularly, but the investigator doesn’t take the time to call the school and verify

that information, or a parent states that they are regularly drug tested at work or by the drug support group they are attending, and the investigator doesn't contact the work or program to verify. Thus incorrect information is presented to the court.

FOSTER PARENTS

Strengths

Worker Responsiveness and Resource Family Consultant (RFC) Support- Workers seem to be more responsive now than they used to be. The RFC calls back quickly. They didn't used to know who the RFC was; now they know who she is and she's great. She calls regularly to find out how the foster parents are doing. The RFC is very personable.

Foster Parent Training- The foster parent training is awesome, as are the continuing classes. There are lots of classes to choose from. The needs of foster parents change as the kids grow, so they need ongoing training.

The Children's Center- The Children's Center is a great support. The counselor and psychiatrist are great. They don't just support the children, they support the foster parents, too. They really understand what foster parents are going through.

Improvement Opportunities

Strengthening the Rights of Children- Foster parents believe the children's parents have more rights than the children do as far as the court is concerned, and they don't like that. Foster parents have seen a big shift toward parents' rights at the expense of the child's rights. If there's not enough evidence of abuse, kids go back into dangerous homes. It scares the foster parents to see this happen and they are upset about it. After making no progress for several months, parents can make a little progress right before the court date and get a second chance to have their children returned home.

Increasing Involvement of GAL's- Foster parents and children don't have contact with the GAL except at court. Most GAL's don't attend team meetings or visit the child in the home. If the child doesn't attend court, they never meet the GAL.

Worker Turnover- Foster parents have seen many workers come and go, even on the same case. There needs to be more consistency and less turnover of workers.

PROVIDERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Strengths

Child and Family Team Meetings (CFTM)- Child and Family Team Meetings are held on most cases. Cases that don't have CFTMs seem to be more problematic. When people who are important to the case don't attend team meetings, none of their other team members have the

important information they need from that team member. Getting everyone together solves that problem. Cases that have team meetings do a lot better than other cases. When a team meeting is held right away at the beginning of a case, the ball gets rolling and providers and partners build rapport with the worker.

Supervision- There are many good DCFS supervisors. Good supervision of workers is crucial. If workers get really good supervision, they will be paying attention to the right things. Sometimes supervisors need to help workers know what they should be paying attention to. The supervisor sets the mentality for workers. Administration knows who the good and bad supervisors are, but sometimes bad supervisors aren't held accountable.

Improvement Opportunities

Communication with Community Partners- Sometimes schools aren't informed that a child is involved with DCFS because the worker has never contacted the school. Schools have lots of resources they could be using to help the kids if they knew. After schools make CPS referrals, they aren't told what happened with the referral. Then schools don't know if there's something they should be doing. More communication is needed between YIC and DCFS. Workers think if the child's not in a YIC classroom, they don't need to let the school know they're in foster care. YIC people are always willing to come to team meetings, but it's hard to get DCFS to invite them. Some agencies invite YIC to team with them, but DCFS doesn't. Schools need to know when the kids leave custody or come into custody.

Worker Turnover- Worker turnover is a big problem. Workers turn over every two or three years. Providers have been complaining about turnover for a long time and haven't seen anything improve.

DCFS ADMINISTRATORS, SUPERVISORS, and CASEWORKERS

Strengths

In-home Services- The focus is on providing in-home services rather than removing children from their homes. Outcomes aren't good when kids are removed. Workers haven't seen much change yet, but they are trying to do more in-home cases. They make an effort to put more services in the home initially. They do a removal staffing if they are anticipating that a child will be removed. They see a lot more effort to find services and keep kids in the home. It's harder to get DCFS to agree to a removal. Everyone is seeing a lot more voluntary cases. There are many times when DCFS asks that a child not be removed, but the GAL overrides it. The in-home funding hasn't caught up with the change in the in-home philosophy. There are more funds and services available if the child is in foster care. Lots of courts and judges are too quick to remove kids from the home, especially when a teen begins to get ungovernable. Judges use removal as a punishment. Foster care funds could be better used on in-home services.

Kinship Placements- There is a focus on finding kinship placements as soon as children come into care. It has gotten easier to get relative grants for kin. The whole process of getting kin

families approved has gotten easier. The region has specific kinship workers to support the kin families. Kin families are much more supported. They have help getting specified relative grants. Having kinship workers has been great. As soon as background checks are done, children can go to kin immediately without even going to Christmas Box House. Involving kin allows children to avoid foster care placement entirely. Kin frequently take permanent custody or adopt. Kinship placements don't disrupt as often as foster care placements do. The region has educated the caseworkers about kin homes not having to be perfect. It used to be easier on workers to place children in foster homes because kin homes need a lot of support. Now the kinship workers help the kin families get grants and they support the families. Thirty percent of initial placements are to kinship homes. There has been a substantial increase in the number of families who get Medicaid coverage. They have developed a specific team to do specified relative grants and help them get Medicaid. All the kinship specialists from the regions get together once a month.

Teaming between CPS and Permanency Workers- Teaming between CPS and permanency workers has improved. Permanency workers are involved in cases early on. It's easier to transfer cases. In the past it was hard to get permanency workers involved. The CPS and Permanency roles are much better defined. For example, it's now clear who does the assessment. Families have teams around them right up front. The teams usually consist of family, kin, worker, and supervisor. Teaming has been a focus in the region.

Smaller Caseloads- They were able to hire new caseworkers and reduce caseloads. The last two rounds of new trainees seem to be exceptional people. The new workers are very good. The region had a bigger pool of applicants to pick from so they got more qualified applicants than usual.

Incentive Pay- The reinstatement of incentive awards is a positive development. There were "Visionary Voice" awards given out last month and others will be retroactive to awardees back to July.

QCR Reviews- The QCR process has gotten better. It's been less work for workers every year. The process has been streamlined. Reviewers have been trying to understand where workers are at. It was the region, not the reviewers, who made QCR feel personal because they wanted the region to pass so badly. Workers would like the cases to be pulled without warning and reviewed without preparation. Workers are now being told cases should be QCR ready all year long. That has helped make it easier when a case is pulled for QCR. Now QCR is about giving you ideas to do things better. Years ago it felt like a personal attack on the worker.

Neighborhood Model- The neighborhood model has been good. Clients like having an office near them. Traveling to court is still difficult if they have to go clear downtown. Lots of foster homes are in the Herriman area so it's good to have an office closer to them.

Administrative Team- Right now the administrative team is really effective. For a long time it felt like decisions never got made. Now they are getting made in a more timely fashion. The administrative team used to table and re-table things until they got input from everyone. Now they come to consensus more often and more quickly. They are functioning as a team. They're

not so territorial. Everybody steps in and helps. Work has had to be sent from the TAL office out to the neighborhoods. It speaks volumes that the administrators look forward to administrative meetings because they know they'll get support there.

Improvement Opportunities

Funding for In-home Services- There's more funding for services for children in foster care, so it's hard to serve kids at home. There's talk about keeping kids in the home, but in reality there's not funding or services to support it. There are federal funds available for foster cases that are not available for in-home cases. There is nothing CPS can do to help kids prior to removal. They would like to fund things like paying for therapy for children to prevent removal. Contracts can't be accessed until the child is in custody. If the family doesn't have insurance or Medicaid, nothing can be offered. It depends which team you're on whether they're seeing the effect of focusing on in-home services or not. It's hard to get permanency workers and supervisors to agree to voluntary services; they think the cases should be removals and they push for court involvement.

Increased Workload- The checklist for CPS workers of things they have to do before they can transfer a case to a permanency worker is getting really long. Every change the region makes seems to add more work to CPS workers. CPS workers are overwhelmed. Referrals seem to be getting worse because families have more stressors. Families are in really serious need of services. Many referrals need immediate removal. CPS workers are getting tied up in trials because the family gets an attorney. One of the workers in this group is going to a trial every day. One case took four months in trial just to terminate reunification. When couples divorce, DCFS gets a slew of referrals covering many years that haven't been reported before.

Centralized Intake- CPS workers are frustrated with centralized intake. Many centralized intake workers are inexperienced. They call daily for things like red tags that shouldn't even be accepted cases. They are very liberal in what they'll take. They don't know what to ask or what information to get, such as a current phone number. CPS wastes a lot of time trying to find addresses and phone numbers because centralized intake isn't asking for them. That means workers have to go to multiple schools to find the kids and priorities get missed because intake sends referrals to the wrong city. Sometimes roles are mislabeled; for example, the number of the referent was given as the client's number, so the worker called the referent rather than the perpetrator. Sometimes centralized intake has two different workers investigating the same family. They get duplicate cases from intake workers where the name is spelled just slightly differently.

Accessibility of Supervisors- Supervisors need to be accessible to workers. Caseworkers believe supervisors aren't available to them because they are involved in so many committees. They feel supervisors are unavailable two thirds of the time. The most important functions of supervisors need to be defined. Supervisors need to be available to staff cases. Caseworkers need feedback from them in a timely manner. Supervisors need to let their workers know where they are and when they'll be back. The job of a worker is awful without the support of a supervisor. Workers

have to feel someone is advocating for them. A lot of times the workers have to answer questions and give direction that supervisors should be giving, but they're not around to do it.

Loss of Services- Lots of good contract providers and services have been lost. They have been replaced with providers who don't do as good a job. Workers are the ones who have to explain to clients why providers were changed, but workers aren't told why contracts are changed. Group homes and proctor homes are struggling. The Medicaid unbundling has caused trauma for providers. Providers want to push new services on the kids to make up for lost revenue even if it's not in the best interest of the child. Group sessions are being replaced with individual sessions. If DCFS won't agree to the additional services, they say they don't have a placement home for the kid. They have lost group homes. There isn't anywhere to put foster children. They have to use JJS placements, which mixes abused youth with criminal youth. Kids who need higher levels of care are being put in lower levels of care and then they run away. There is no mental health provider except Provo Canyon and they don't take girls. Primary Children's Medical Center isn't available anymore. Girls with mental health issues have nowhere to be placed. There are a lot of individuals who don't like certain providers, but they have to place kids there because they're the only ones on contract.

DCFS Staff Morale- Everyone needs a raise. Many state employees are doing second jobs and are eligible for food stamps. The compression of wages is one of the biggest concerns. New workers are paid the same as experienced workers. DCFS employees feel very disrespected and unappreciated. The thing that would matter most to workers would be having something in place that would reduce job stress such as more workers in each office and not having to take cases that require travel. There aren't enough cars available to cover the needs, and 36 cents a mile doesn't cover the cost of driving a personal vehicle. Workers want job stress reduced more than they want a pay increase. Workers hate that the region can move them at any time to any supervisor without warning. It disrupts relationships, impacts families, and destroys continuity. Nothing happens to workers who don't do their jobs. That makes good workers lower their standards because nobody cares if you're doing a good job, so good workers get burned out and leave.

Loss of Domestic Violence Services- Even before the change in the statute last year, but especially since the change, domestic violence services have been changing. There aren't resources and supports for domestic violence. There is one person in the region doing presentations and attending meetings, but they're down to one worker and they're not doing much. Domestic violence needs more resources.

Communication with DCFS State Office - There are times when the communication between the state office and region isn't clear. The region hears about things that are happening, but they don't get clear direction on when things will change or why they're changing. They don't get any time to prepare workers, and they don't get information on how the region is supposed to proceed. The state program specialists give them lots of information if they ask, but otherwise it never gets communicated down to the region. Sometimes policies go from draft to final without anyone telling the region. The region doesn't know when things were implemented. The State

Office seems really unclear about what's going to happen and when. Mandatory communications are the only things the region is sure of.

Children Eligible for DSPD Services- Children are coming into care only because they have disabilities and can't access services otherwise. Children shouldn't be removed from their homes just because parents can't afford to address a child's disability. People in the disability arena are starting to say, "Give them to DCFS because they have money."

III. Child and Family Status, System Performance, Analysis, and Trends










The QCR findings are presented in graphic form to help quantify the observations of the qualitative review. Graphs show a comparison of scores for past years' reviews with the current review. The graphs of the two broad domains of Child and Family Status and System Performance show the percent of cases in which the key indicators were judged to be "acceptable." A six-point rating scale is used to determine whether or not an indicator is judged to be acceptable. Reviewers scored each of the cases reviewed using this rating scale. The range of ratings is as follows:

- 1: Completely Unacceptable
- 2: Substantially Unacceptable
- 3: Partially Unacceptable
- 4: Minimally Acceptable
- 5: Substantially Acceptable
- 6: Optimal Status/Performance

Child and Family Status and System Performance are evaluated using 15 key indicators. Graphs presenting the overall scores for each domain are presented below. They are followed by graphs showing the distribution of scores for each indicator within each of the two domains.

Child and Family Status Indicators

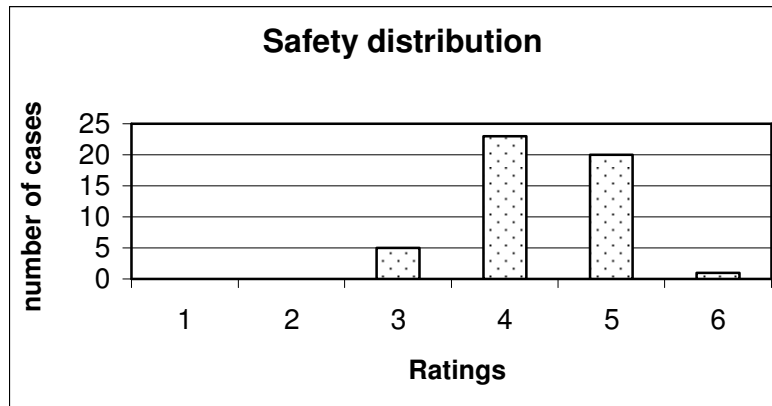
Overall Status

Salt Lake Region Child Status									
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	Standard: 70% on all indicators except Safety which is 85% Standard: Criteria 85% on overall score	FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	
								Current Scores	Trends
Safety	44	5	 90%	91%	94%	90%	88%	90%	Improved and above standard
Stability	35	14	 71%	59%	73%	61%	79%	71%	Decreased but above standard
Prospect for Permanence	29	20	 59%	54%	76%	58%	58%	59%	Improved but below standard
Health/Physical Well-being	48	1	 98%	100%	100%	99%	100%	98%	Decreased but above standard
Emot./Behavioral Well-being	41	8	 84%	81%	85%	86%	88%	84%	Decreased but above standard
Learning	46	3	 94%	80%	82%	88%	83%	94%	Improved and above standard
Family Connections	29	7	 81%					81%	
Satisfaction	43	6	 88%	94%	99%	92%	90%	88%	Decreased but above standard
Overall Score	42	7	 86%	89%	91%	90%	88%	86%	Decreased but above standard
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

Safety

Summative Questions: Is the child safe from manageable risks of harm (caused by others or by the child) in his/her daily living, learning, working and recreational environments? Are others in the child's daily environments safe from the child? Is the child free from unreasonable intimidation and fears at home and school?

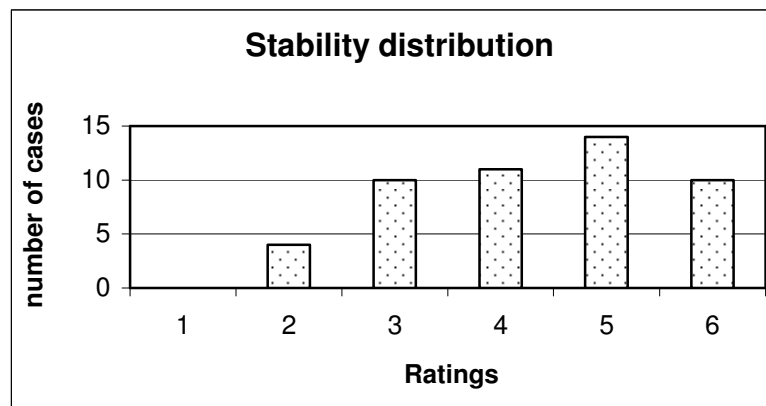
Findings: 90% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a slight increase over last year's score of 88% and is above standard.



Stability

Summative Questions: Are the child's daily living and learning arrangements stable and free from risk of disruption? If not, are appropriate services being provided to achieve stability and reduce the probability of disruption?

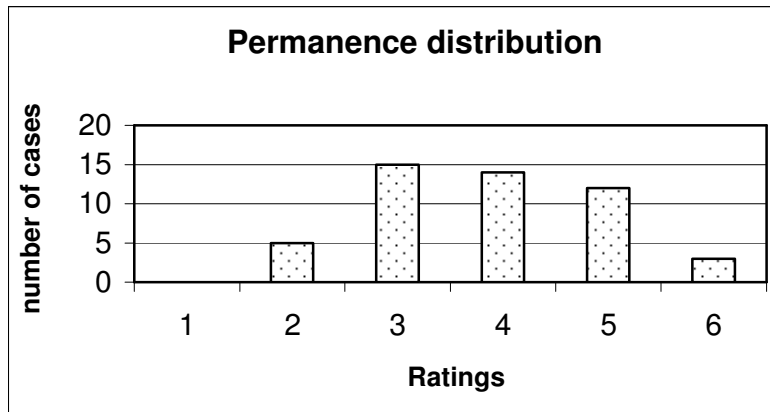
Findings: 71% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 79%, but the score remained above standard.



Prospects for Permanence

Summative Questions: Is the child living in a home that the child, caregivers, and other stakeholders believe will endure until the child becomes independent? If not, is a permanency plan presently being implemented on a timely basis that will ensure that the child will live in enduring relationships that provide a sense of family, stability, and belonging?

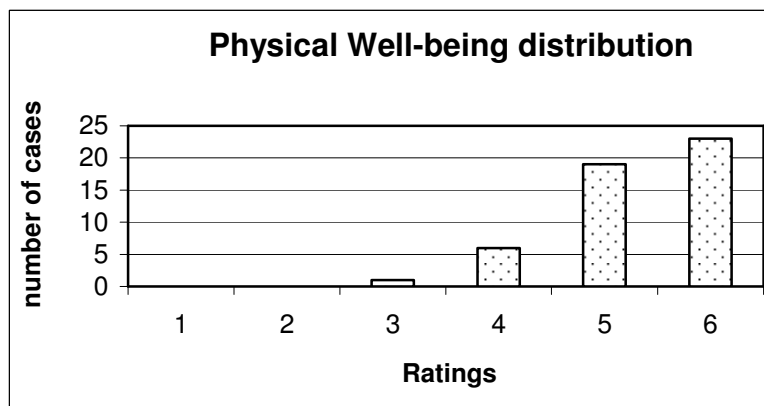
Findings: 59% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is the nearly identical to last year's score of 58% and below the 70% standard.



Health/Physical Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child in good health? Are the child's basic physical needs being met? Does the child have health care services, as needed?

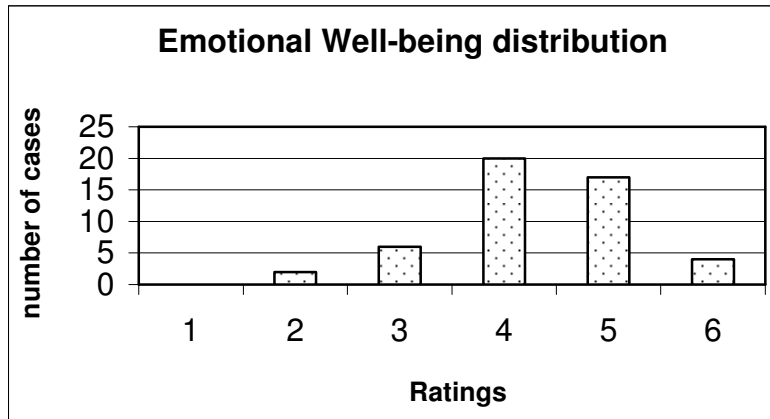
Findings: 98% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is slightly lower than last year's score of 100% and well above standard.



Emotional/Behavioral Well-Being

Summative Questions: Is the child doing well emotionally and behaviorally? If not, is the child making reasonable progress toward stable and adequate functioning, emotionally and behaviorally, at home and school?

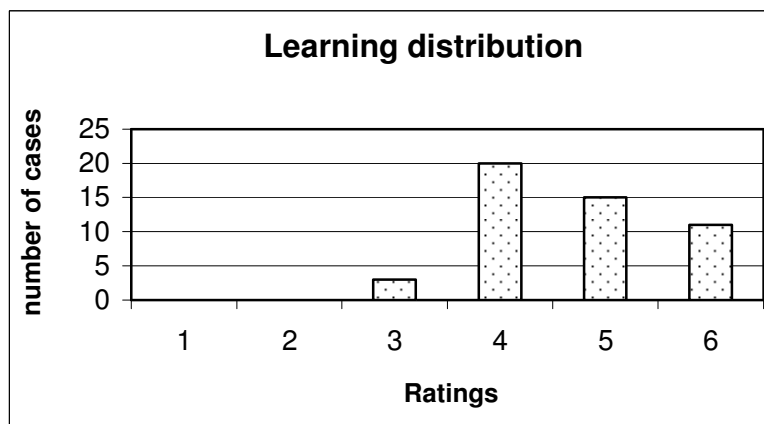
Findings: 84% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 88% but well above standard.



Learning Progress

Summative Question: (For children age five and older.) Is the child learning, progressing and gaining essential functional capabilities at a rate commensurate with his/her age and ability?
Note: There is a supplementary scale used with children under the age of five that puts greater emphasis on developmental progress. Scores from the two scales are combined for this report.

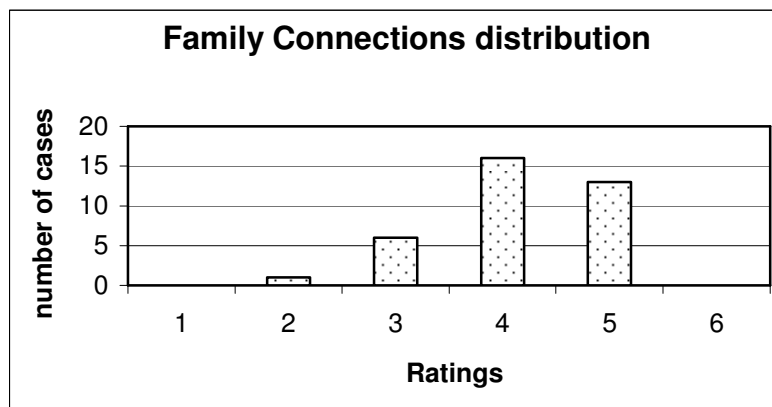
Findings: 94% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a substantial increase over last year's score of 83% and far above standard.



Family Connections

Summative Question: While the child and family are living apart, are family relationships and connections being maintained through appropriate visits and other connecting strategies, unless compelling reasons exist for keeping them apart?

Findings: 81% of cases scored acceptable on Family Connections. This is a new indicator so there is no comparative data from the previous year. This indicator measures whether or not the relationship between the child and the mother, father, siblings, and other important family members is being maintained. The scores for the mother and siblings were identical at 86%. The scores for other family members (grandparents, aunts, etc) was slightly lower at 78%. The score for fathers was substantially below standard at 47%.



	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	
Family Connections			FY12
Overall Connections	29	7	81%
Siblings	12	2	86%
Mother	24	4	86%
Father	7	8	47%
Other	21	6	78%

Satisfaction

Summative Question: Are the child, parent/guardian, and substitute caregiver satisfied with the supports and services they are receiving?

Findings: 88% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6) on the overall Satisfaction score. This is a slight decrease from last year's score of 90% and substantially above standard. Reviewers rated the satisfaction of children, mothers, fathers, and caregivers. Scores for the individual parties ranged from 93% for children to 70% for fathers. The Satisfaction scores for all parties were above standard.

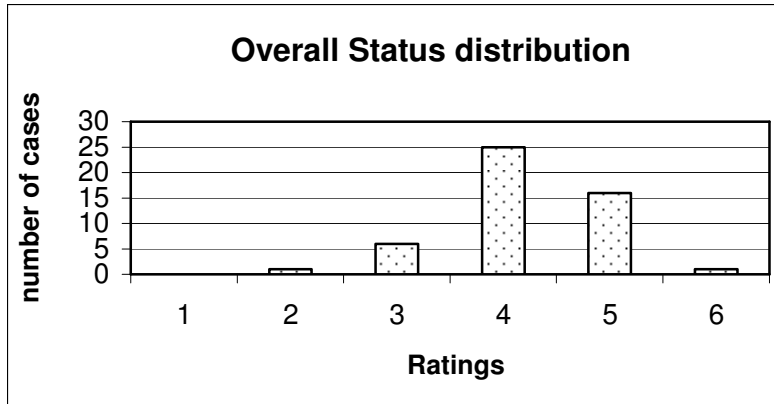


Satisfaction	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY12
Child	25	2	93%
Mother	24	7	77%
Father	7	3	70%
Caregiver	31	5	86%

Overall Child and Family Status








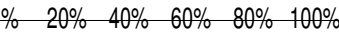
Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for the Child and Family Status indicators, how well are this child and family presently doing? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall Child and Family Status using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the first seven status indicators (minus Satisfaction) must score acceptable in order for the Overall Score to be acceptable. A unique condition affects the rating of Overall Child and Family status in every case: The Safety indicator always acts as a “trump” so that the Overall Child and Family status rating cannot be acceptable unless the Safety indicator is also acceptable.

Findings: 86% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). The overall Child and Family Status score decreased from last year's score of 88% but remained just above the 85% standard.



System Performance Indicators

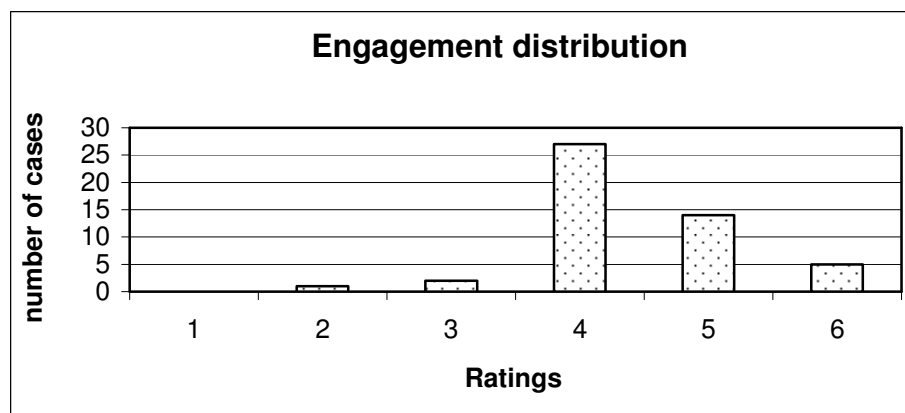
Overall System

Salt Lake Region System Performance - Combined									
	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)		FY08	FY09	FY10	FY11	FY12	
			Standard: 70% on all indicators					Current	
			Standard: 85% on overall score					Scores	Trends
Engagement	46	3		94%	91%	86%	76%	94%	Improved and above standard
Teaming	32	17		71%	73%	79%	69%	65%	Decreased and below standard
Assessment	40	9		67%	78%	72%	63%	82%	Improved and above standard
Long-term View	36	13		64%	78%	65%	58%	73%	Improved and above standard
Child & Family Plan	32	17		71%	72%	69%	61%	65%	Improved but below standard
Intervention Adequacy	41	8		88%	97%	92%	85%	84%	Decreased but above standard
Tracking & Adapting	43	6		88%	91%	86%	83%	88%	Improved and above standard
Overall Score	42	7		88%	93%	86%	83%	86%	Improved and above standard
			0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%						

Child and Family Engagement

Summative Questions: Are family members (parents, grandparents, and stepparents) or substitute caregivers active participants in the process by which service decisions are made about the child and family? Are parents/caregivers partners in planning, providing, and monitoring supports and services for the child? Is the child actively participating in decisions made about his/her future?

Findings: 94% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a substantial increase from last year's score of 76% and far above standard. Separate scores were given for child, mother, father and guardian. An overall score was then selected by the reviewer. The overall score of 94% was nearly identical to the Child score of 95% and matched the Guardian score of 94%. The Mother score was somewhat lower at 83% while the Father score was just 65%.



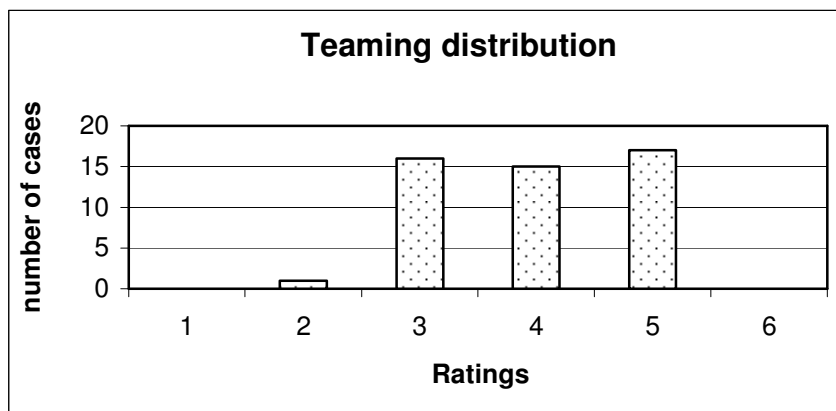
Engagement	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY12
Overall	46	3	94%
Child	35	2	95%
Mother	30	6	83%
Father	13	7	65%
Guardian	15	1	94%

Child and Family Teaming

Summative Questions: Do the people who provide services to the child/family function as a team? Do the actions of the team reflect a pattern of effective teamwork and collaboration that benefits the child and family? Is there effective coordination and continuity in the organization and provision of services across all interveners and service settings? Is there a single point of

coordination and accountability for the assembly, delivery, and results of services provided for this child and family?

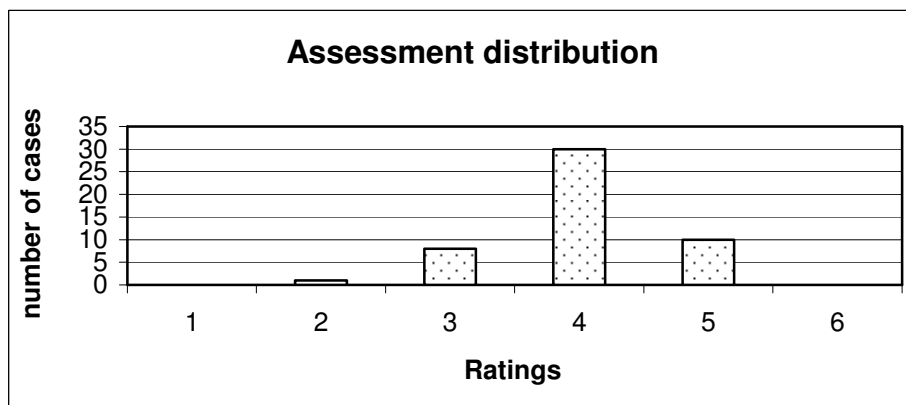
Findings: 65% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a decrease from last year's score of 69% and is below the 70% standard.



Child and Family Assessment

Summative Questions: Are the current, obvious and substantial strengths and needs of the child and family identified through existing assessments, both formal and informal, so that all interveners collectively have a “big picture” understanding of the child and family and how to provide effective services for them? Are the critical underlying issues identified that must be resolved for the child to live safely with his/her family independent of agency supervision or to obtain an independent and enduring home?

Findings: 82% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is a substantial increase from last year's score of 63% and well above the 70% standard. Individual scores were given for this indicator. The highest score was the Caregiver score at 91%. The Child score was just slightly lower at 88%. The Mother score was 77% while the Father score trailed at 52%.

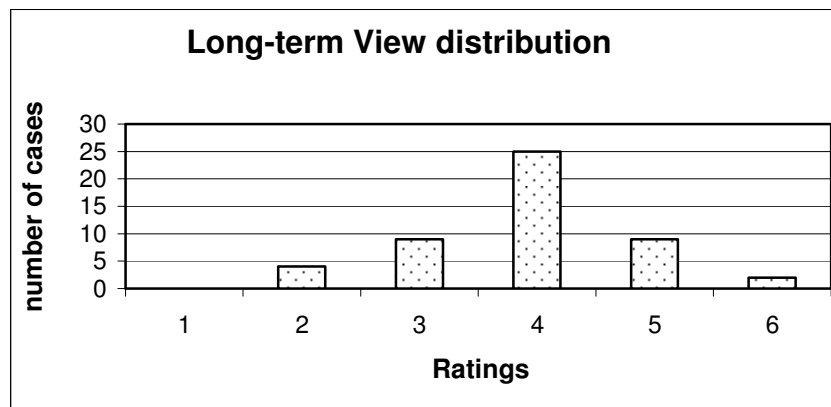


Assessment	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY12
Overall	40	9	82%
Child	43	6	88%
Mother	27	8	77%
Father	11	10	52%
Caregiver	32	3	91%

Long-Term View

Summative Questions: Is there an explicit plan for this child and family that should enable them to live safely and independent from the child welfare system? Does the plan provide direction and support for making smooth transitions across settings, providers and levels of service?

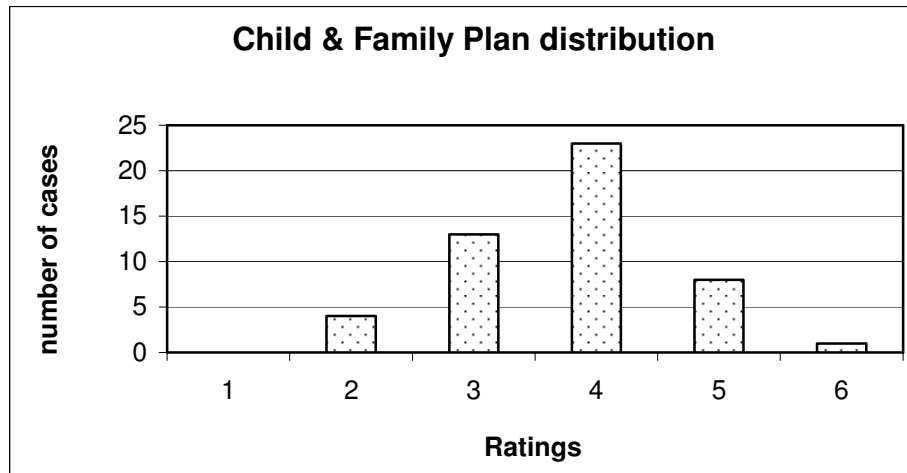
Findings: 73% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a substantial increase from 58% last year and back above standard.



Child and Family Plan

Summative Questions: Is the Child and Family Plan individualized and relevant to needs and goals? Are supports, services and interventions assembled into a holistic and coherent service process that provides a mix of elements uniquely matched to the child/family's situation and preferences? Does the combination of supports and services fit the child and family's situation so as to maximize potential results and minimize conflicting strategies and inconveniences?

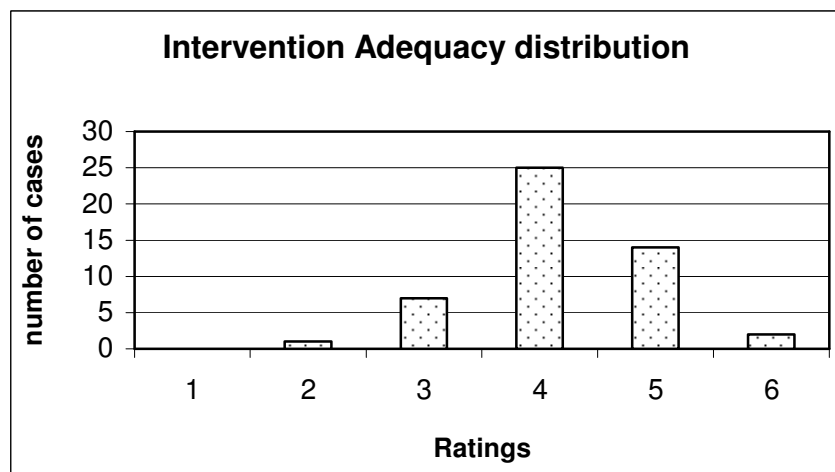
Findings: 65% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is a modest increase from last year's score of 61% but not yet above standard.



Intervention Adequacy

Summative Questions: Are the services and activities specified in the child and family plan 1) being implemented as planned, 2) delivered in a timely manner, and 3) at an appropriate level of intensity? Are the necessary supports, services and resources available to the child and family to meet the needs identified in the plan?

Findings: 84% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). This is nearly identical to last year's score of 85% and above standard. This indication was scored separately for Child, Mother, Father, and Caregiver. The scores for Child and Caregiver exceeded the Overall Score at 90% and 92% respectively. The score for Mother was substantially lower at 66% and the score for Father was only 44%.

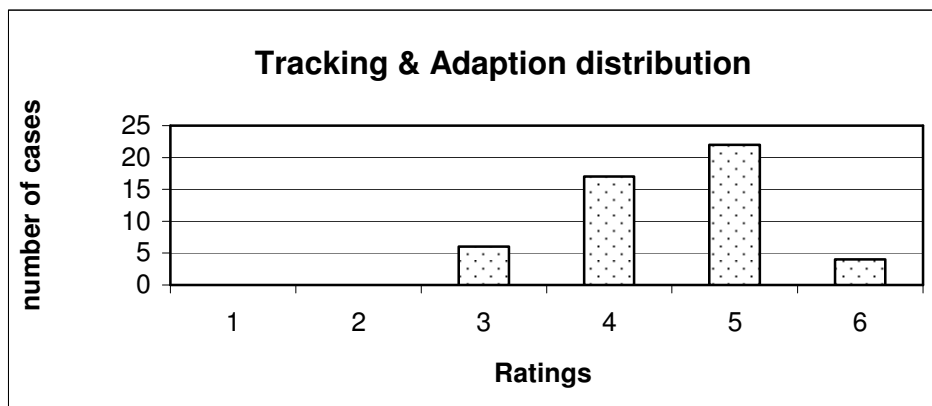


Intervention Adequacy	# of cases (+)	# of cases (-)	FY12
Overall	41	8	84%
Child	44	5	90%
Mother	21	11	66%
Father	8	10	44%
Caregiver	33	3	92%

Tracking and Adaptation

Summative Questions: Are the child and family status, service process, and results routinely followed along and evaluated? Are services modified to respond to the changing needs of the child and family and to apply knowledge gained about service efforts and results to create a self-correcting service process?

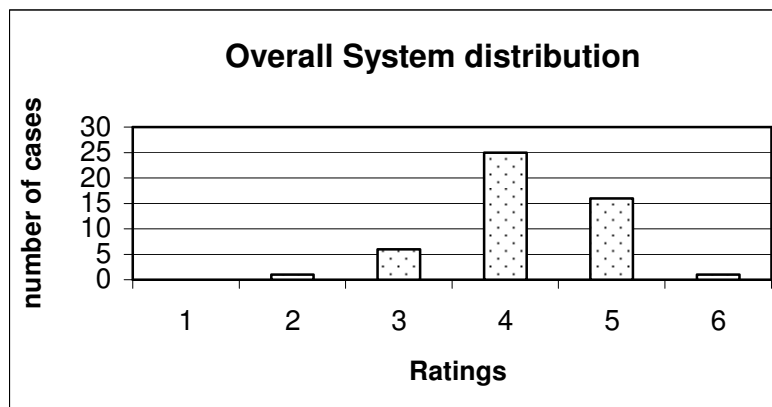
Findings: 88% of cases reviewed were in the acceptable range (4-6). This is an increase over last year's score of 83%.



Overall System Performance

Summative Questions: Based on the Qualitative Case Review scores determined for System Performance indicators, how well is the service system functioning for this child now? A special scoring procedure is used to determine Overall System Performance using the 6-point rating scale. In addition to scoring a 4 with this procedure, four of the seven system performance indicators must score acceptable in order for the overall score to be acceptable.

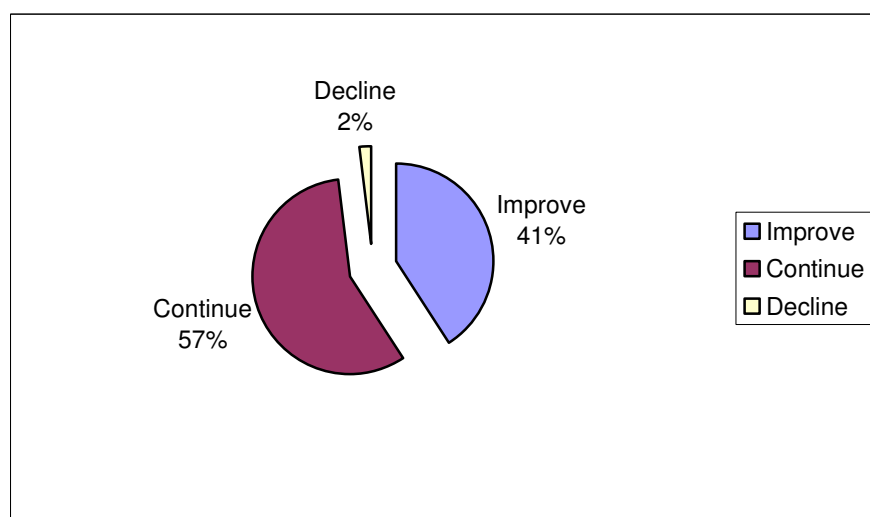
Findings: 86% of cases reviewed were within the acceptable range (4-6). The Overall System Performance score increased from last year's score of 83% and is back above standard.



Status Forecast

One additional measure of case status is the reviewers' prognosis of the child and family's likely status in the next six months, given the current level of system performance. Reviewers respond to this question: "Based on current DCFS involvement for this child, family, and caregiver, is the child's overall status likely to improve, stay about the same, or decline over the next six months?"

Of the 49 cases reviewed, 41% (20 cases) anticipated an improvement in family status over the next six months. In 57% (28) of the cases, family status was likely to stay about the same. It was anticipated that in 2% (1) of the cases reviewed, the family's status would decline over the next six months.



Outcome Matrix

The display below presents a matrix analysis of the service testing results during the current QCR. Each of the cells in the matrix shows the percent of children and families experiencing one of four possible outcomes:

- Outcome 1: child and family status acceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 2: child and family status unacceptable, system performance acceptable
- Outcome 3: child and family status acceptable, system performance unacceptable
- Outcome 4: child and family status unacceptable, system performance unacceptable

The desired result is to have as many children and families in Outcome 1 as possible and as few in Outcome 4 as possible. It is fortunate that some children and families do well in spite of unacceptable system performance (Outcome 3). Experience suggests that these are most often either unusually resilient or resourceful children and families, or children and families who have some “champion” or advocate who protects them from the shortcomings of the system. Unfortunately, there may also be some children and families who, in spite of good system performance, do not do well (these children and families would fall in Outcome 2).

The outcome matrix for children and families reviewed during the Salt Lake Region review indicates that 76% of the cases had acceptable ratings on both Child Status and System Performance. There were two cases that rated unacceptable on both child status and system performance.

Favorable Status of Child		Unfavorable Status of Child	
Outcome 1		Outcome 2	
Good status for the child.		Poor status for the child.	
Agency services presently acceptable.		Agency services minimally acceptable but limited in reach or efficacy.	
n= 37		n= 5	
75.5%		10.2%	
85.7%			
Outcome 3		Outcome 4	
Good status for the child,		Poor status for the child.	
Agency services mixed or presently acceptable.		Agency services presently unacceptable.	
n= 5		n= 2	
10.2%		4.1%	
85.7%		14.3%	

V. Analysis of the Data

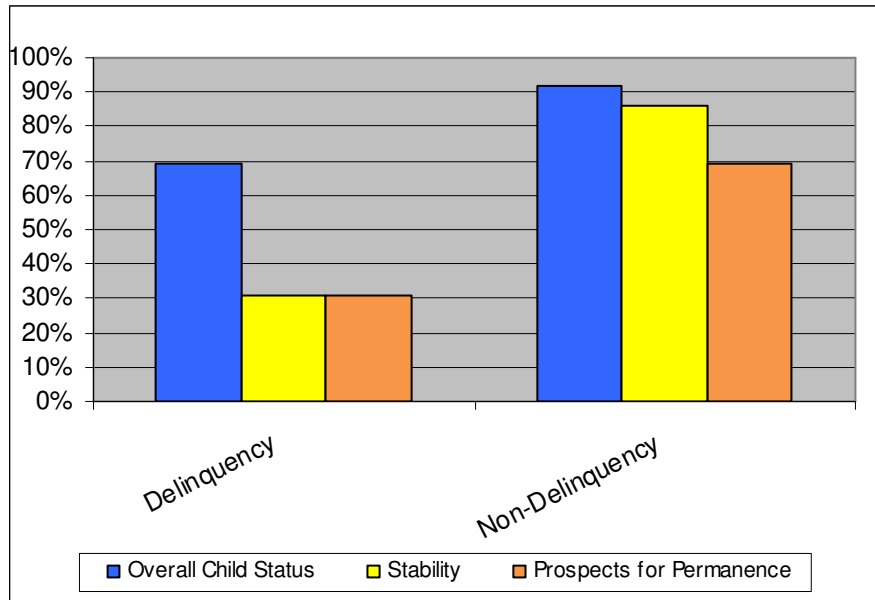
RESULTS BY CASE TYPE

The following tables compare how the different Case Types performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There was only one Family Preservation case (PFP) and one PSC case (voluntary services). Both of these cases scored acceptable on both child Status and System Performance. The court ordered In-Home service (PSS) scored 100% on Safety, Permanency, Engagement, Long-term View and Intervention Adequacy. The low score for PSS cases was Teaming at 50%. The Case Type that had the lowest Overall System Performance was Foster Care, which was below standard at 83%. Scores of 63% to 68% on Teaming, Long-term View, and Child and Family Plan on Foster Care cases led to the lower overall score. Foster Care cases were also the only type of case that fell below standard on Overall Child Status.

Case Type		# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Foster Care	SCF	41	88%	51%	83%	93%	68%	80%	68%	63%	80%	88%	83%
In-Home	PSS	6	100%	100%	100%	100%	50%	83%	100%	83%	100%	83%	100%
In-Home	PSC	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%
In-Home	PFP	1	100%	100%	100%	100%	0%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Collection of demographic information regarding cases included in the case sample includes the question, “Did the child come into services due to delinquency instead of abuse and neglect?” Thirteen of the 49 cases (27%) in the sample are reported to have entered services due to delinquency rather than abuse or neglect. The following table compares how cases identified as Delinquency cases and Non-Delinquency cases performed on Stability, Permanency, Overall Child Status, and Overall System Performance. Delinquency cases had substantially poor outcomes in all four areas.

Case Type	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
Delinquency	13	31%	31%	69%	85%
Non-Delinquency	36	86%	69%	92%	86%



RESULTS BY PERMANENCY GOAL

The following table compares how the different Permanency Goals performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. There were six different Permanency Goal types represented in the case sample. Prospects for Permanence was a challenge for all of the goal types except Remain Home. This is particularly surprising for cases with the goal of Adoption. Individualized Permanency and Guardianship goals excelled in the overall system performance with 100%, while Adoption and Reunification cases fell below standard.

Permanency Goal	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Adoption	9	100%	78%	100%	89%	56%	67%	78%	22%	100%	89%	78%
Guardianship (Non-Rel)	2	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%
Guardianship (Relative)	2	50%	50%	50%	100%	50%	100%	50%	50%	100%	100%	100%
Individualized Perm.	11	82%	55%	82%	82%	73%	91%	64%	82%	82%	91%	91%
Remain Home	6	100%	100%	100%	100%	33%	83%	100%	67%	100%	83%	100%
Reunification	19	89%	42%	84%	100%	74%	79%	74%	79%	68%	84%	79%

RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

Caseload

The following table compares how different Caseload Sizes performed on some key child status and core system performance indicators. Caseloads in the sample were divided into two

categories: caseloads of 16 cases or less and caseloads of 17 cases or more. The case sample suggests that 85% of the caseworkers have caseloads of 16 cases or less (40 of 47 workers, two workers did not provide data). The smaller caseloads performed better on Overall Child Status. The two caseload sizes were nearly identical in their Overall System Performance scores. The data suggests that higher caseloads may present more of a challenge in Teaming and Planning.

Caseload Size	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
16 cases or less	40	93%	55%	88%	95%	70%	83%	70%	65%	85%	90%	85%
17 cases or more	7	71%	71%	71%	100%	43%	71%	86%	57%	86%	71%	86%

Worker Experience

The following table compares how Length of Employment as a caseworker impacts performance. One highlight of the chart is that 12 of the workers were hired within the past year, whereas none of the caseworkers had been hired in the previous year, illustrating the effects of the hiring freeze implemented that year. The majority of caseworkers included in the sample (76%) had more than two years experience as a caseworker. The caseworker's length of employment in their current position did not make a significant difference in the outcome of the overall scores, with the newest workers and the most experienced workers scoring nearly identically. The data suggests that individual worker's level of performance is more of a factor in determining outcomes than the amount of time they have been employed as a caseworker.

Length of Employment in Current Position	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Less than 12 months	11	100%	64%	100%	82%	64%	82%	73%	73%	64%	91%	82%
12 to 24 months	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
24 to 36 months	4	75%	75%	75%	100%	75%	75%	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%
36 to 48 months	8	75%	63%	75%	88%	63%	63%	63%	50%	88%	88%	75%
48 to 60 months	10	100%	60%	90%	100%	60%	90%	80%	70%	80%	70%	90%
60 to 72 months	4	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	75%	100%	100%	100%
More than 72 months	12	83%	42%	75%	100%	58%	83%	67%	58%	92%	92%	83%

RESULTS BY OFFICE

The following table compares how different region offices performed on some key child status and system performance indicators. Cases from all six offices in the Salt Lake Region were selected as part of the sample. Four offices (Metro, Mid Towne, Tooele, and West Valley)

performed above standard on Overall System Performance. The South Towne and TAL offices were below standard at 80% and 77% respectively. In four of the six offices, Teaming was the lowest scoring system indicator while in two other offices the low score was Child and Family Plan.

Office	# in Sample	Safety	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Engagement	Teaming	Assessment	Long-Term View	Child and Family Plan	Intervention Adequacy	Tracking & Adapting	Overall System Performance
Metro	11	91%	73%	91%	100%	64%	73%	82%	73%	73%	91%	91%
Mid Towne	7	100%	57%	86%	86%	71%	86%	71%	43%	86%	86%	86%
South Towne	5	0%	40%	80%	100%	60%	100%	20%	60%	100%	80%	80%
TAL	13	85%	46%	85%	85%	62%	77%	69%	69%	69%	85%	77%
Tooele	2	50%	50%	50%	100%	50%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Oquirrh	11	100%	73%	91%	100%	73%	82%	91%	64%	100%	91%	91%

RESULTS BY AGE

OSR looked at the effect of age on Stability, Permanency, Overall Child Status, and Overall System Performance. The scores on Stability and Permanency were highest for the youngest children. They were lowest for teens ages 13 to 15, with teens over age 16 scoring just a little better. The Overall Status Scores reflected this pattern.

Age	# in Sample	Stability	Prospects for Permanence	Overall Child Status	Overall System Performance
0-5 years	13	92%	77%	100%	92%
6-12 years	11	73%	64%	82%	82%
13-15 years	13	54%	46%	77%	92%
16 + years	12	67%	50%	83%	75%

SYSTEM CORE INDICATORS

Below is data for all system indicators (Engagement, Teaming, Assessment, Long-term View, Child and Family Plan, Intervention Adequacy, and Tracking and Adaptation) over the last 12 years showing how the ratings of 1 (completely unacceptable), 2 (substantially unacceptable), 3 (partially unacceptable), 4 (minimally acceptable), 5 (substantially acceptable) and 6 (optimal) are trending within each indicator. The first chart for each indicator in the section below is an average of the scores for that indicator. The next chart and line graph represent the percentage of

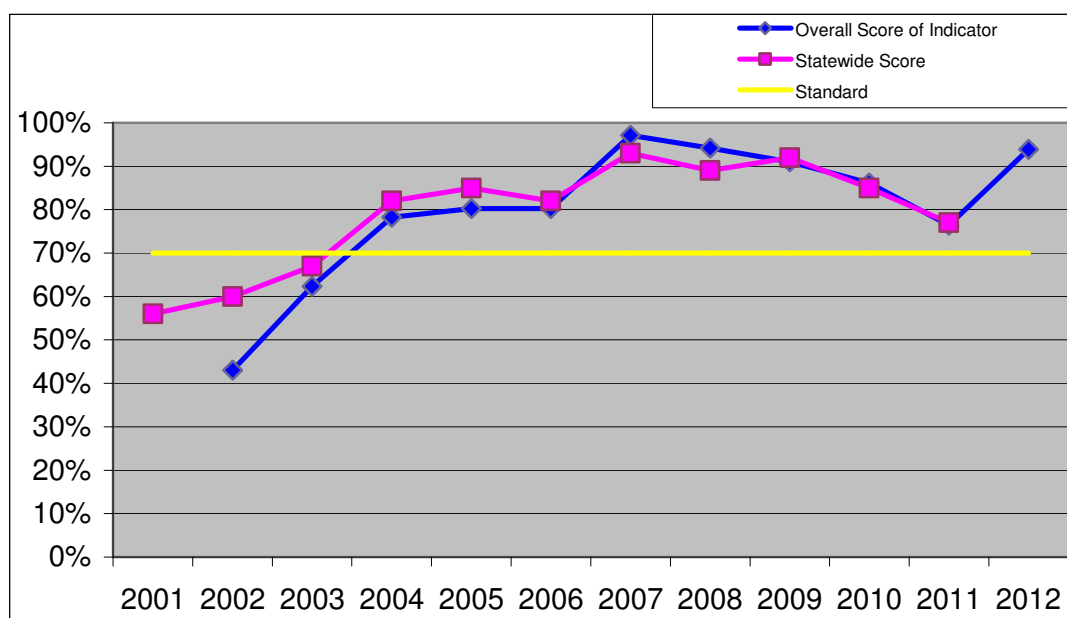
the indicator that scored within the acceptable range. The most ideal trend would be to see an increase in the average score of the indicator along with an increase in the percentage score. Statewide scores for FY2012 will not be available until the end of the year and therefore do not appear in the tables or charts.

Salt Lake region's scores on System Performance had been in a downward trend. This year that trend was reversed. Five of the seven System Performance indicators improved this year resulting in reversals of the downward trend in those indicators and Overall System Performance. The five indicators that improved this year were Engagement (76% to 94%), Assessment (63% to 82%), Long-term View (58% to 73%), Child and Family Plan (61% to 65%) and Tracking and Adaptation (83% to 88%).

Child and Family Engagement

Both the average and the percentage scores on Engagement showed a significant increase this year. Because Salt Lake region has one-third of the cases that will be reviewed in the state this year, the substantial increase in their Engagement score should lead to a significant increase in the statewide score.

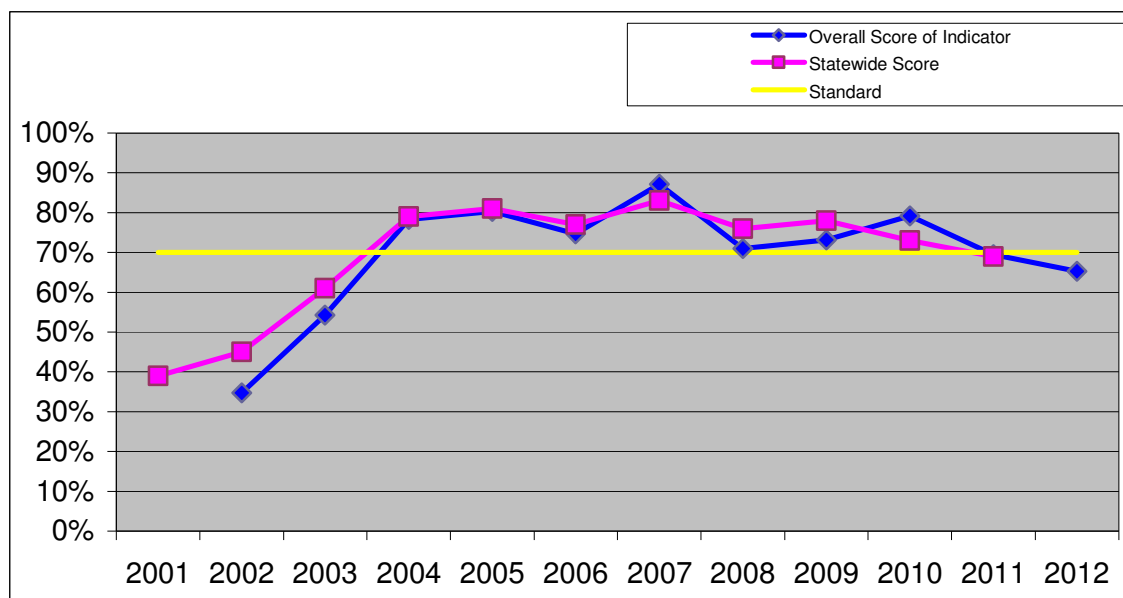
Engagement												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.35	3.67	4.33	4.32	4.37	4.57	4.36	4.36	4.39	4.21	4.41
Overall Score of Indicator		43%	62%	78%	80%	80%	97%	94%	91%	86%	76%	94%
Statewide Score	56%	60%	67%	82%	85%	82%	93%	89%	92%	85%	77%	



Child and Family Team and Coordination

After falling below standard for the first time in the past seven years (since 2004) last year, the Teaming score continued its downward trend this year and is again below the 70% standard. The Teaming indicator was one of only two indicators that declined this year. The average score on the indicator also dropped for the second consecutive year.

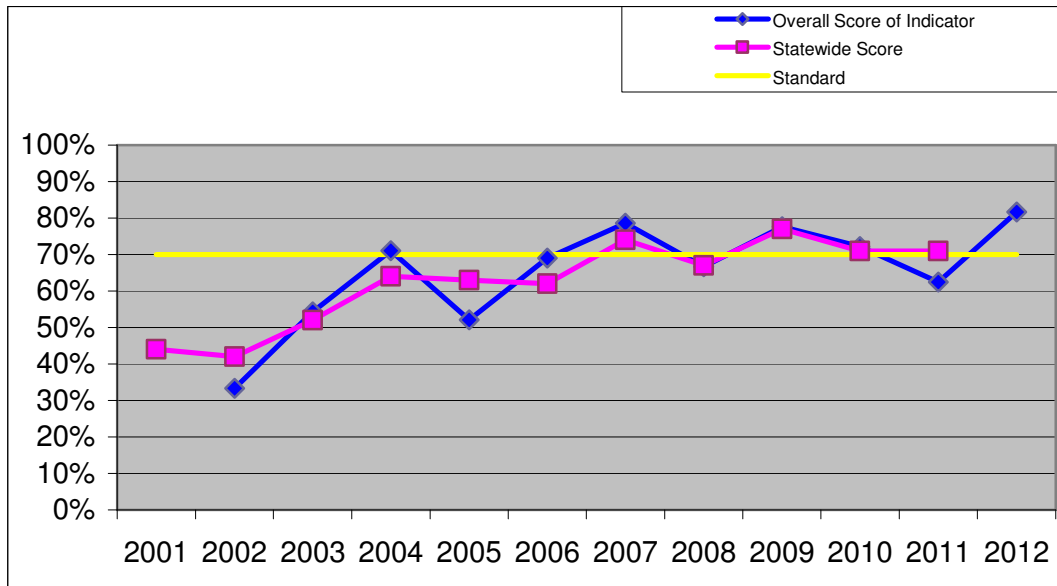
Teaming												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.06	3.64	4.22	4.25	4.03	4.33	3.96	4.07	4.17	4.06	3.98
Overall Score of Indicator		35%	54%	78%	80%	75%	87%	71%	73%	79%	69%	65%
Statewide Score	39%	45%	61%	79%	81%	77%	83%	76%	78%	73%	69%	



Child and Family Assessment

As indicated in the line graph chart below, the Assessment indicator experienced a significant increase on the percentage score this year, with an accompanying increase in the average score.

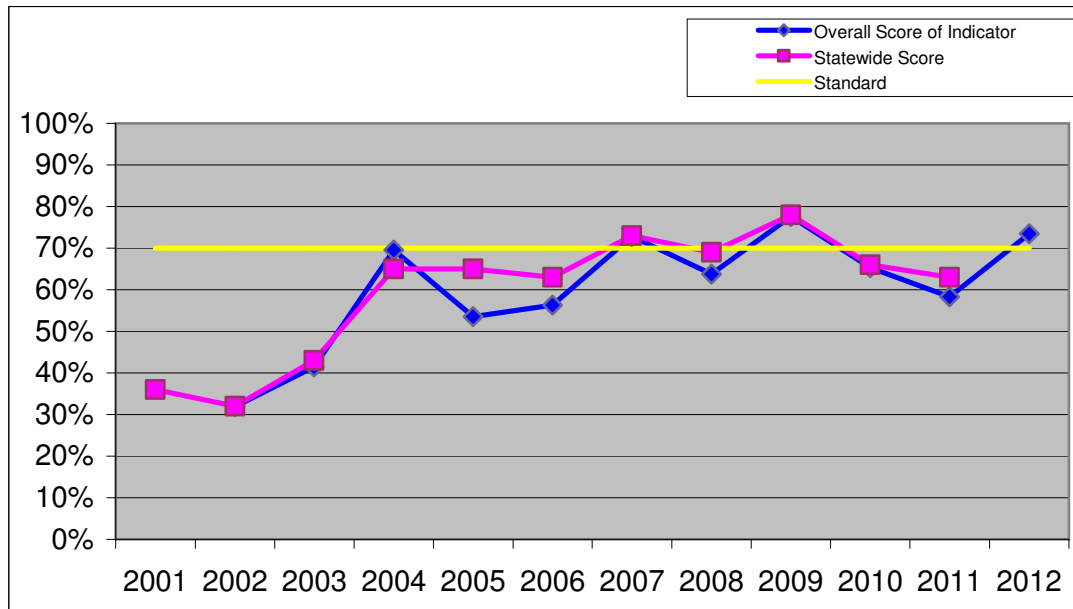
Assessment												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.07	3.53	4.03	3.72	3.85	4.14	3.86	4.07	4.04	3.85	4.00
Overall Score of Indicator		33%	54%	71%	52%	69%	79%	67%	78%	72%	63%	82%
Statewide Score	44%	42%	52%	64%	63%	62%	74%	67%	77%	71%	71%	



Long-Term View

The Long-term View indicator, which had experienced a two-year, rebounded to an above standard score of 73%. This is a remarkable improvement from last year's score of 58%. The average score has also significantly improved after dropping last year.

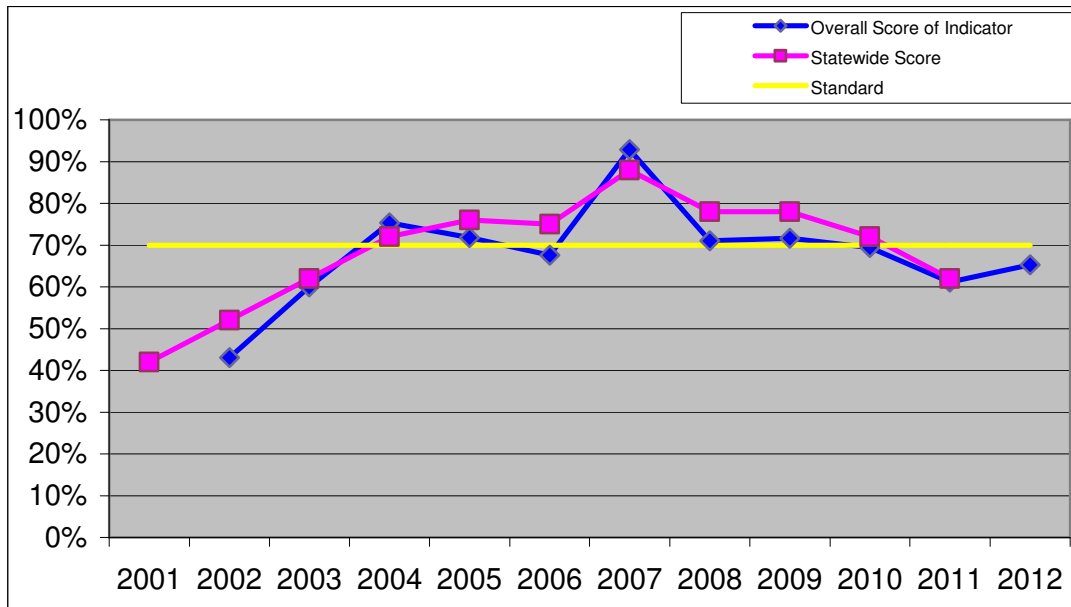
Long-Term View												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		2.88	3.30	4.00	3.70	3.76	4.00	3.96	4.07	3.90	3.72	3.92
Overall Score of Indicator		32%	41%	70%	54%	56%	73%	64%	78%	65%	58%	73%
Statewide Score	36%	32%	43%	65%	65%	63%	73%	69%	78%	66%	63%	



Child and Family Plan

The Child and Family Plan score improved a little from 61% to 65% but is still below standard. However, the downward trend that was seen the last two years has been reversed.

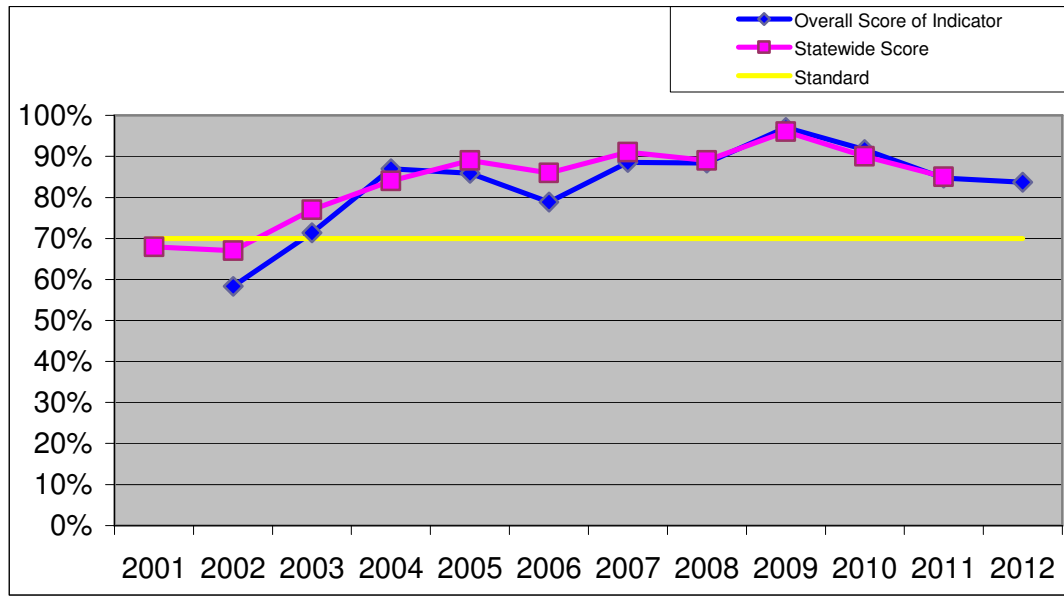
Child and Family Plan												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.35	3.53	4.09	3.99	3.96	4.36	3.93	4.03	3.97	3.78	3.78
Overall Score of Indicator		43%	60%	75%	72%	68%	93%	71%	72%	69%	61%	65%
Statewide Score	42%	52%	62%	72%	76%	75%	88%	78%	78%	72%	62%	



Intervention Adequacy

As demonstrated in the line graph chart below, the Intervention Adequacy indicator has experienced a three-year downward trend; however, even with the decreases in overall score, the indicator has been maintained well above the 70% standard for the past nine years.

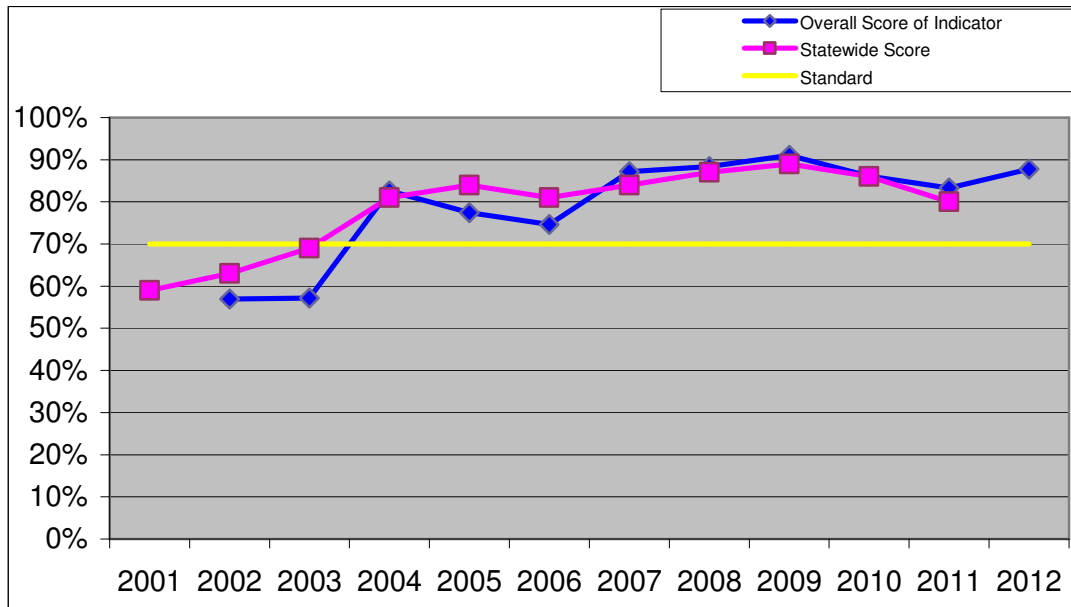
Intervention Adequacy												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.60	3.96	4.48	4.45	4.21	4.54	4.42	4.52	4.49	4.40	4.18
Overall Score of Indicator		58%	71%	87%	86%	79%	89%	88%	97%	92%	85%	84%
Statewide Score	68%	67%	77%	84%	89%	86%	91%	89%	96%	90%	85%	



Tracking and Adaptation

As indicated in the line graph chart below, the overall percentage of Tracking and Adaptation indicators scoring in the acceptable range continues to be maintained well above the 70% standard. This indicator also reversed a two-year declining trend and rose this year to 88%. The Tracking and Adaptation indicator has been maintained above standard for the past nine years.

Tracking and Adaptation												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Average Score of Indicator		3.72	3.86	4.48	4.28	4.18	4.50	4.39	4.57	4.50	4.39	4.49
Overall Score of Indicator		57%	57%	83%	77%	75%	87%	88%	91%	86%	83%	88%
Statewide Score	59%	63%	69%	81%	84%	81%	84%	87%	89%	86%	80%	



V. Summary and Recommendations

Summary

During the FY2012 Salt Lake Region Qualitative Case Review (QCR), numerous strengths were identified about child welfare practice in the Salt Lake Region. It is clear that there is significant commitment and hard work devoted to ensuring the safety and well-being of the children and families. During the QCR review, several opportunities for practice improvement were also identified that could improve and enhance the services being provided.

In regards to the child status indicators, the Region exceeded the 85% standard for Overall Child Status with a score of 86%. This was a slight decrease from last's year's score of 88%. The Overall Child Status score has declined from 91% to 86% over the past three years; however, the Overall Child Status score remained above the 85% standard. Safety remained above the 85% standard, and six of the other seven Child Status indicators performed above the 70% standard with scores ranging from 71% on stability to 98% on Health/Physical Well-being. Prospects for Permanence continued to be the most challenging status indicator as it scored below 60% for the third year in a row. The Safety score (90%) exceeded the Overall Child Status score (86%), meaning two of the cases had unacceptable status on a majority of indicators other than Safety.

Salt Lake Region reversed the two-year downward trend on Overall System Performance and bounced back this year from being below standard last year (83%) to being above standard this year (86%). Similarly, on five of the seven System Performance indicators the downward trend was reversed and scored improved this year (Engagement, Assessment, Long-term View, Child and Family Plan, and Tracking and Adaptation). Teaming continued to trend downward and was below standard at 65%. Although the Child and Family Plan score improved from last year, it was also below standard at 65%. However, the other five System Performance indicators all scored above the 70% standard, leading to an increase in the Overall System Performance score.

As part of the effort to address the scores that fell below standard, the Region has developed an improvement plan. That plan is available for review on the Division's website which can be accessed through the following link: http://www.hsdcs.utah.gov/court_oversight.htm.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Salt Lake Region use the 50 case stories as part of their ongoing effort to improve the services they provide to children and families. The case stories could be used to help sustain performance that is above standard and elevate performance that is below standard. Review of the case stories in which the indicators scored substantially well or optimal could be used as examples in an effort to help duplicate great work. Careful review of the case stories regarding the circumstances that resulted in the unacceptable ratings could be beneficial in formulating training opportunities or specific strategies to address those challenges. The region would benefit from focusing on the following four indicators during the coming year.

Child Status

Permanency has traditionally been one of the indicators whose score has lagged behind the other indicators. Permanency was the lowest scoring indicator for the Salt Lake Region. Focusing efforts on achieving permanency for a greater number of children who are in custody would most likely achieve the added benefit of an increase in the Long-term View score.

Stability is another indicator that has lagged historically. The Stability score was above standard at 71%, but would benefit from increased attention so as not to fall below standard next year. An increase in the Stability score would also most likely lead to an increase in the Permanency score.

System Performance

Teaming is fundamental to good practice. Improvements around Teaming most often lead to improvements in many of the other indicators. Teaming could be strengthened by including all team members and assuring the team is effectively moving toward accomplishment of case goals.

Child and Family Plan score has hovered just at or below standard for the past several years. Increased attention to updating the content of the plan as the plan comes due every six months and individualizing the plan to the needs of the child and family would lead to improved scores.